

# E mployer ADVISOR



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The *Employer Advisor* is a quarterly publication provided by the Utah Department of Workforce Services

## Online Filing: Better Than Ever

Filing Quarterly Unemployment Insurance Reports has never been easier. The Utah Department of Workforce Services (DWS) has a variety of electronic and online filing options available for both tax preparers and individual employers. One of these is online quarterly reporting via our web site at [jobs.utah.gov/ui/employer.asp](http://jobs.utah.gov/ui/employer.asp)

One of the greatest benefits to filing online is the elimination of paper forms. Filling out paper forms is tedious and results in lost time and expense. When you file online, you won't receive any quarterly reporting forms. Instead, as a new filer,

you will receive a postcard reminding you when it is time to file. This past quarter, DWS ran a test project to cut administrative costs. Quarterly reminder cards that are typically sent to all web filers were sent only to new web filers.

This project is currently under review to determine its effectiveness. Reminder cards may or may not be sent in the future. If you are a web filer and you did not receive a postcard this past quarter, remember to mark your calendar to serve as a reminder for next quarter.

## Give Electronic Form 3 Filing a Try!

Recently, one of the largest payroll providers in the state, participated in a pilot project to file all of their quarterly Form 3 information electronically. Instead of sending individual paper forms and checks for over 3500 clients, Form 3 information was uploaded to a CD ROM and the aggregate total of all contributions due was sent on one check. Doing this greatly decreased processing time and expense for both the payroll provider and DWS.

If you are a payroll company or tax preparer and need information about filing Form 3 information electronically, please contact Tyler Brian, Technical Services Supervisor, at 801-526-9599.

# Pandemic Influenza: Planning Checklist

In the event of pandemic influenza, employers will be heavily involved in protecting their employees' health and safety as well as minimizing negative impacts to their businesses and communities. The Department of Health and Human Services and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention have developed guidelines including a checklist to assist employers in planning for an influenza pandemic as well as other comparable catastrophes.

Few of us remember the Great Pandemic of 1918, with only a third of today's population; the United States suffered an estimated 675,000 deaths when up to 28 percent of Americans were infected. Statistically, those infected had a 2.5 percent chance of dying.

Because people lack immunity to a new influenza virus, pandemics may rapidly affect virtually all countries. They are considered unstoppable because the virus spreads very quickly by coughing or sneezing. Infected individuals can spread the virus before symptoms appear. A mild pandemic today could claim between two and 7.5 million lives worldwide. The estimates for a more virulent virus are much higher.

When the next influenza pandemic occurs, social disruption may be widespread. Services provided by hospitals, banks, stores, restaurants, transportation companies, and government offices may be disrupt-

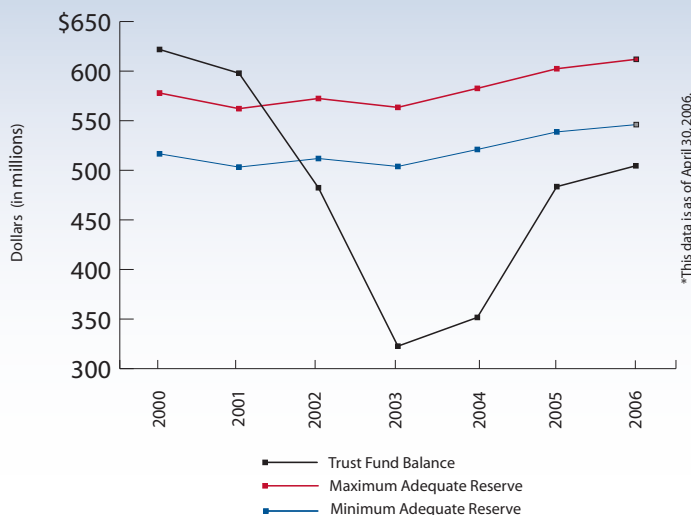
ed. Employees may find that working will be difficult or impossible. Employers may be unable to staff their worksites. Schools may close for an extended period of time. Employees may need to remain at home with children.

Proper preparation can go a long way towards eliminating or reducing the panic that may accompany such an event along with reducing the transmission of the disease. Steps include the following:

1. Plan for the impact of a pandemic on your business.
2. Plan for the impact of a pandemic on your employees and customers.
3. Establish policies to be implemented during a pandemic.
4. Allocate resources to protect your employees and customers during a pandemic.
5. Communicate with and educate your employees.
6. Coordinate with external organizations and help your community.

There are web sites to help employers prepare for a pandemic. One excellent site worth visiting is: <http://pandemicflu.gov/plan/businesschecklist.html#1.1>

**Trust Fund Balances**  
Calendar Year 2000-2006\*



## UI Trust Fund

The Unemployment Insurance (UI) Trust Fund is the means by which unemployment insurance benefits are paid. Contributions paid by employers on a quarterly basis are deposited into the fund and stored in the U.S. Treasury. The Trust Fund levels are also used to determine the reserve factor portion of the tax rates assessed to employers. This is calculated using the Trust Fund Balance as a percent of the Minimum and Maximum Adequate Reserves. As expected, the fund is drawn upon heavily during recessionary periods and is built up during growth periods. Many Utah employers may realize lower tax rates in future years if the current fund growth continues.